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TAGS: PINS, PTER, SHUM, TU
SUBJECT: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE ON
ALLEGEDDEATHSAT DIYARBAKIR; CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY

REF: ANKARA 01697

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A FEBRUARY 15 AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL (NEW YORK OFFICE) PRESS RELEASE ON
REPORTS THAT SEVEN TURKISH PRISONERS DIED IN DIYARBAKIR
MILITARY PRISON IN JANUARY 1984.

2. BEGIN TEXT

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALLS ON TURKEY TO ACCOUNT FOR
DEATHS IN PRISON
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL TODAY (WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15,
1984) CALLED ON THE HEAD OF THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES TO
ACCOUNT PUBLICLY FOR SEVEN PRISONERS REPORTED TO HAVE
DIED IN A MILITARY PRISON IN EASTERN TURKEY IN JANUARY.

IN AN URGENT MESSAGE THE TURKISH CHIEF OF GENERAL
STAFF, GENERAL NECDET URUG, THE WORLDWIDE HUMAN RIGHTS
ORGANIZATION EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT REPORTS OF THE

RESUMPTION OF TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT OF INMATES OF
DIYARBAKIR MILITARY PRISON.

IT NAMED SEVEN PRISONERS REPORTED TO HAVE DIED IN THE
PRISON THIS YEAR. FOUR WERE KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN BURIED,
IT SAID. IN THREE OTHER CASES, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
HAD LEARNED THAT THE FAMILIES HAD BEEN INFORMED OF
THEIR RELATIVES' DEATHS BUT THAT THE BODIES WERE NOT
AVAILABLE FOR BURIAL.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SAID THAT ALL THE FAMILIES
CONCERNED SHOULD BE GIVEN THE BODIES OF THEIR DEAD
RELATIVES AND ALLOWED TO ARRANGE INDEPENDENT MEDICAL
EXAMINATIONS TO ESTABLISH THE CAUSE OF DEATH.

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THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALL FOLLOWED A VISIT BY ONE OF ITS DELEGATES TO DIYARBAKIR (MORE THAN 1,000 KILOMETRES FROM ISTANBUL) TO SEEK INFORMATION ABOUT THREE PRISONERS REPORTED TO HAVE DIED IN UNEXPLAINED CIRCUMSTANCES.

THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES IN DIYARBAKIR ACKNOWLEDGED THE DEATHS OF TWO PRISONERS, NECMETTIN BUYUKKAYA AND YILMAZ DEMIR. THEY TOLD THE DELEGATE THAT ONE OF THE PRISONERS HAD COMMITTED SUICIDE AND THE OTHER HAD DIED OF A BRAIN TUMOR, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SAID. NO FORM OF INQUEST PROCEEDINGS ARE KNOWN TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE, IT SAID.

SINCE THE DELEGATE'S VISIT THE ORGANIZATION HAS RECEIVED INFORMATION ON THE DEATHS OF FOUR MORE PRISONERS.

THESE REPORTED DEATHS CAME AFTER INMATES IN THE MILITARY PRISON HAD BEGUN THEIR SECOND HUNGER STRIKE WITHIN SIX MONTHS. THIS ONE IS REPORTED TO BE IN PROTEST AGAINST THE ALLEGED RESUMPTION OF TORTURE IN THE PRISON AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF CONCESSIONS GRANTED DURING A PREVIOUS HUNGER STRIKE IN SEPTEMBER 1983.

AN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE SAID TODAY THAT THE ORGANIZATION HAD RECEIVED FREQUENT COMPLAINTS OF TORTURE OF INMATES AT DIYARBAKIR IN RECENT YEARS AND HAD REPEATEDLY URGED THE AUTHORITIES TO INVESTIGATE THE ALLEGATIONS AND TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO HALT THE TORTURE.

IN MAY 1982 IT ASKED TO BE ALLOWED TO SEND A TEAM TO CHECK ON REPORTS THAT NEARLY 100 KURDISH PRISONERS WERE

IN POOR HEALTH AS A RESULT OF TORTURE AND HARSH CONDITIONS.

ONE OF THE PEOPLE IT NAMED AT THE TIME, KURDISH LAWYER HUSEYIN YILDIRIM, WAS LATER RELEASED AND LEFT TURKEY. HE GAVE A HORRIFIC ACCOUNT OF TORTURES HE SAID HE AND OTHER KURDISH PRISONERS HAD SUFFERED, INCLUDING BEING BEATEN AND GIVEN ELECTRIC SHOCKS ON SENSITIVE PARTS OF THE BODY WHILE TIED TO A WOODEN CROSS. THREE OF THESE PRISONERS ARE KNOWN TO HAVE DIED IN CUSTODY. THE AUTHORITIES ACKNOWLEDGED ONE OF THE DEATHS; THEY SAID THE PRISONER COMMITTED SUICIDE.

END TEXT

3. FOR ANKARA: WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED A CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY FROM SENATOR SPECTER, WHO REQUESTS THE DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ON A LETTER FROM ONE OF HIS CONSTITUENTS WHO ASKS IF ANYTHING CAN BE DONE ABOUT AN ENCLOSED JANUARY 17 AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT ON AN ALLEGED HUNGER STRIKE AT DIYARBAKIR MILITARY PRISON. AI REPORT ALLEGES THE HUNGER STRIKE IS "IN PROTEST AGAINST THE WITHDRAWAL OF CONCESSIONS GRANTED DURING A PREVIOUS HUNGER STRIKE IN SEPTEMBER 1983, AND AGAINST THE RESUMPTION OF TORTURE." "NO VISITS BY RELATIVES OR LAWYERS HAVE BEEN ALLOWED SINCE EARLY JANUARY 1984." THE AMNESTY REPORT CONTINUES: "AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ASKED THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW A DELEGATION TO VISIT THE PRISON, BUT NO RESPONSE HAS BEEN RECEIVED. ... TWO LAWYERS, SERAFETTIN KAYA AND HUSEYIN YILDIRIM, WERE THEMSELVES DETAINED AND TORTURED IN DIYARBAKIR MILITARY PRISON, APPARENTLY FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN THEIR DEFENCE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN DIYARBAKIR.

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAS BEEN INFORMED THAT BECAUSE OF
THE RISKS VERY FEW LAWYERS ARE WILLING TO DEFEND
POLITICAL PRISONERS IN DIYARBAKIR, WITH THE RESULT THAT
ONLY A FEW LAWYERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEFENSE OF
THOUSANDS OF PRISONERS."

4. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY COMMENT FOR
INCLUSION IN OUR RESPONSE TO SENATOR SPECTER. SHULTZ
END OF MESSAGE CONFIDENTIAL

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